

R 271340Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7923

S E C R E T TIRANA 000140

DS/IP/ATA, DS/IP/EUR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/26/2019

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE -  
SPRING 2009

REF: STATE 33533

Classified By: RSO PATRICK LEONARD FOR REASON 1.4 (g)

11. (C) DEMONSTRATIONS

1A. Yes, there are four major religious groups that in theory, could carry out anti-American demonstrations. However, as Albania has a long history of inter-faith tolerance and almost all Albanians are pro-American, we judge the prospect to be remote. Some radical elements within the Suni Muslim community would be the most likely to demonstrate against the U.S., if so provoked. There are several ethnic communities in the country including Greek, Egyptian, Vlach and Roma. Potentially any of these groups could carry out anti-American demonstrations, however, none have done so. These potential demonstrations could be significant in fervor but not in number of participants, although so far, there have been no significant religious demonstrations in Tirana.

1B. No

1C. No

1D. N/A

1E. N/A

1F. N/A

1G. N/A

1H. N/A

1I. Yes; there have been anti-government protests sponsored by the opposition parties and organizations such as a left-leaning civic organization, a former military officer association and certain labor organizations. The rally attracted over 1,000 people. There has been no violence reported in these demonstrations.

1J. No

1K. The number of participants has been approximately around 1,000-5,000 (Note that the number above is unusual).

1L. Demonstrations in recent years in Albania have been generally peaceful, although, the 1990's saw a number of very violent demonstrations, and there were two demonstrations in early 2004 with some violence.

1M. No

12. (U) MACRO CONFLICT CONDITIONS

1A. No; if anything, Albania has played a moderating role for ethnic Albanians in the region, particularly Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Greece.

1B. N/A

1C. N/A

1D. N/A

13. HOST COUNTRY CAPABILITIES

1A. No; Albanian law enforcement officers are extremely susceptible to bribery. Resources are extremely limited and salaries are low. Basic police training is improving. A new basic training program for "patrol generalists" was started just recently through ICITAP. The goal is to train 6,000

incumbents over the next three years to "patrol generalist" level. The training will teach recruits and veterans all facets of police work/skills such as traffic patrol, crime scene investigation and call response. Recently, the Albanian State Police laid off nearly 800 police officers, some of whom had seniority in the ranks and were trained through various international training programs, to include DS/ATA and ICITAP. The Albanian State Police (ASP) teamed up with DS and FBI on an eight month joint fugitive task force that saw the successful apprehension of five wanted fugitives. The task force also was instrumental in helping arrest three Albanian citizens who were in the United States and were wanted by Albanian authorities. The Department of Justice/OPDAT has implemented a joint investigative unit with the ASP for financial and economic investigations as well. The task force broke up a criminal ring suspected of robbing numerous financial institutions in Tirana. Credit also has to be given to the DS computer forensics lab who were instrumental in digitally enhancing photos of crime scenes, which led to numerous arrests.

1B. Yes, under the auspices of the DS Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program, Albanian police officers have participated in numerous training opportunities such as vital Installation Protection, Surveillance Detection, Crisis Response, Police Executive role in Combating Terrorism, and Post Bomb Blast Management. Some of the most recent courses are: First Aid Instructor Training, Auto Theft Investigation and TIMS (Total Information Management System) Training, which is a law enforcement information management system utilized at major border crossing points. The Advanced Crises Response (SWAT) was the most recent training conducted by ATA, held in North Carolina for 24 officers. In addition, ICITAP has advisors in key areas of both the Ministries of Interior and Transportation. The training effectiveness is assessed as moderate at best.

1C. Yes, Due to the average police salary being approximately \$250 USD per month and a tradition of taking bribes. Effectiveness of specialized training and progress is undermined by the Government of Albania and Minister of Interior removing or transferring personnel who have been trained and mentored.

1D. Yes, they have aggressively thwarted terrorist and extremists activities in Albania.

1E. Yes, they are extremely responsive and have provided support upon request.

1F. Yes, there have been a number of successes.

1G. Yes

1H. Average. Albania's only international airport, under a German-U.S. owned company, last year passed a TSA security assessment to allow flights directly to the U.S. While significant, only one U.S. carrier flew a direct route to Tirana. They have since declared bankruptcy (ATA).

1I. Average. However, border control is improving with the implementation and utilization of TIMS and other border control techniques. It also depends on where one is crossing as some border points are more susceptible to human trafficking, drug trafficking and stolen vehicles.

1J. Ineffective.

#### 14. (C) INDIGENOUS TERRORISM

1A. No, but there are a few radical individuals who are anti-American.

1B. N/A

1C. No

1D. N/A

1E. No

1F. No

¶G. N/A

¶H. N/A

¶5. (U) OTHER INDIGENOUS TERRORIST GROUPS

¶A. Yes.

¶B. (1) The Albanian National Army (sometimes referred to as AKSH).

¶C. No

¶D. N/A

¶E. N/A

¶6. (S) TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM INDICATORS

¶A. No, affiliates of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) and support groups to Al Qaida were expelled in action of the late 1990's and after 9/11 respectively. There are radical elements and non-governmental organizations that are being monitored by local authorities.

¶B. The EAC assessment of level, intent and scope is low. However, Albania has diplomatic mission fro Iran, Libya, Russia, Serbia, and Palestine, some of which have an intelligence presence. Some NGO's also host numerous Sudanese, Egyptians, Syrians, and other potentially hostile anti-American nationalities. Iran is more concerned with influencing the Albanians through religious means in the Mosques rather than the day-to-day activities of the Americans. Despite their efforts, Iran has not gained much operational traction in Albania.

¶G. Weapons and explosives are extremely easy to acquire from within Albania as well as from neighboring countries. Recent reporting indicates a rise in the availability and usage of remotely controlled IEDs.

WITHERS